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SUBJECT: Guatemalan Opportunist Politicians Sense Further Leftward Trend of Government.

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Among the most sensitive barometers of the political atmosphere in Guatemala are the opportunist politicians in the Arbenz Administration, and four of these have all in recent months more closely associated themselves with pro-Communist currents in their political parties in the apparent belief that Communism is on the advance in Guatemala and that their political futures will best be assured by collaborating with it. They are Augusto CHARNAUD MacDonald, Minister of the Interior; Major Alfonso MARTINEZ, Chief of the National Agrarian Department; Jaime DIAZ Rozzotto, Secretary General of the Presidency; and Humberto GONZALEZ Juárez, Private Secretary to the President.

The case of Charnaud MacDonald is perhaps the most revealing. It will be recalled that in 1951 he broke with the far leftist element then led by Roberto ALVARADO Fuentes in the Partido Acción Revolucionaria (PAR) and withdrew to found his short-lived Socialist Party. At the time he was dubbed by the local press as Guatemala's "Tito" since it was generally believed that he saw a political future in a left wing movement disassociated from international Communism. However, in the period 1951-53 he played a cautious game: on the one hand he joined the Administration in denouncing Opposition anti-Communist moves, while on the other he refrained from associating himself personally with Communist and Communist-front activities. In recent months he has abandoned this equivocal position and has begun openly participating in Communist causes. He was a principal speaker at the July rally to celebrate the "victory" of the "Korean and Chinese peoples" over the "imperialists," and at the Communist-sponsored "Second Continental Congress of Democratic Lawyers" (Embassy Despatch 357, October 26, 1953 and previous). Possibly more significantly, within the Partido de la Revolución Guatemalteca (PRG), of which he is Secretary General, he has more and more sided with the pro-Communist faction led by Alfonso SOLORZANO at the expense of his former, more moderate, companions of the Socialist party with the result that six of the PRG's moderate deputies recently quit the party

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(Emb. Desp 329, October 15, 1953). He has countenanced, if not supported, Solórzano in keeping the new party newspaper, Diario del Pueblo, close to the Communist line and, at a recent meeting of the PRG National Council he gave his personal assurance that the PRG would continue to fight for the common objectives of the Revolution in "close alliance with the working class and its party"--i.e. the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT).

Major Martínez, who was President Arbenz's Private Secretary before becoming head of the National Agrarian Department, has in the last month also abandoned his posture of aloofness from Communist-line causes and openly lent his name to them. He was one of the first to sign the Communist-controlled National Peace Committee's current petition for negotiations between the big powers (Emb. Desp 347, October 21, 1953). More recently the Communist Tribuna Popular of November 3 carried on its front page a letter from Major Martínez endorsing the appeal made by the PGT Central Committee for a strengthened and broadened "National Democratic Front." Major Martínez, it will be recalled, clashed unsuccessfully with Communist agrarian reform policy this spring (Emb. Desp 31, July 13, 1953) and suffered reverses in the PAR with the discrediting of his colleague, Alvaro Hugo BALSAMO (Emb. Desp 181, August 26, 1952). He has now apparently reached the conclusion that the path to better political fortune lies in closer identification with the Communists.

Jaime Díaz Rozzotto, the Secretary General of the Presidency and of the Renovación Nacional, has for some time had an identifiable leaning towards Communism in politics, but his recent pronouncements have gone further than any hitherto. At the July 31 Korean Armistice rally he spoke of the "victory" of Communist China and North Korea as another step toward a "Socialist World" and he made a vitriolic anti-American Communist-line speech a few days ago at a rally to protest the recent U.S.-Spanish base agreement. Díaz Rozzotto has been accused of being an intellectual dilettante by the far left, but few doubt his political opportunism.

Finally, Humberto González Juárez, the President's current Private Secretary, has also guided his dominant faction in the PAR into continued cooperation with the Communist PGT, although he personally has continued to refrain from identifying himself with Communist causes. When the unpolitic statement of Francisco Fernández Foncea that the PAR was destined to become part of the World Communist movement caused Fernández Foncea's removal as PAR Secretary General, a good opportunity presented itself for establishing the PAR in a non-Communist leftist position but González Juárez, who took control of the situation, appeared to sense that such a development would not be politically practicable. He accused Fernández Foncea of "leftist deviation," but the faction

cautiously installed Julio ESTRADA de la Hoz, who has a long record of Communist leanings, as the new Secretary General, and González Juárez was quoted in Tribuna Popular of November 4 of endorsing the PGT's proposed "National Democratic Front" in principle. González Juárez, it will be recalled, formerly thought it politically advantageous to disassociate himself from Communism to the extent of publicly naming over-zealous Communist support as one of the factors leading to his defeat in the 1951 elections for Mayor of Guatemala City. There is no evidence that he now has any leanings toward the Communist doctrines, but as a practiced politician he apparently believes the moment requires alliance with the PGT.

The increasing inclination of these political figures to a pro-Communist line is especially significant in the light of their positions and reputations. All of them are close to President Arbenz in the government, two of them being in his Executive Office, and Major Martínez having been one of his closest personal associates. They are thus situated in excellent positions to sense the President's thinking on Communism. Moreover, as a group they have the reputation of opportunists and shrewd political organizers more interested in political spoils than in ideology. They would be as apt to support the President whether he chose an anti-Communist or a pro-Communist policy. That they have all recently increasingly committed themselves to the pro-Communist line may safely be taken as evidence that their reading of the political scene tells them that Communism is on the rise in this country.

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